



---

**Fwd: MeTooSTEM**

---

Fri, May 3, 2019 at 6:14 PM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** bethann mclaughlin [REDACTED]  
**Date:** November 8, 2018 at 10:35:07 PM EST  
**To:** Julie Libarkin [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Tisha Bohr [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: MeTooSTEM

Good luck to you as well. This would be a grim and hard endeavor if it weren't for your data.

Thank you.

BethAnn McLaughlin, PhD  
Vanderbilt Department of Neurology  
Lab Site [HERE](#)

VBI Director of the Clinical Neuroscience Scholars Program  
Director of Awesome, The Edge for Scholars  
Reviewing Editor, Journal of Neuroscience  
My buddy's cat is nuts video [here](#)

On Nov 8, 2018, at 8:41 PM, Julie Libarkin [REDACTED] wrote:

BethAnn:

I definitely wish you the best with the organization. I have felt uncomfortable for quite some time, have tried to express this discomfort, and ultimately decided the current iteration of the organization is a poor fit for my advocacy style. Do know that this decision was made for me before Shrew and Scott left.

I hope you are able to see our concerns in the light they were made: I firmly believe advocacy groups cannot thrive without the right sort of structure, transparency, and trust.

Best of luck and see you on twitter!  
Julie

On Thu, Nov 8, 2018 at 12:30 PM bethann mclaughlin [REDACTED] wrote:  
Dear Tisha and Julie,



Thank you for writing. There are certainly things I need to work on and I want to do that work.

There are other things that stem from people violating my boundaries and safety that may look abrupt from the outside, but are what I need to do to protect myself and my family. The last month has been filled with intense highs and deep lows I never imagined. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On the backdrop of a public launch, 'my' harasser now suing me for his emotional distress and being away from my daughter for a week traveling to the SfN meeting, this has been indescribably stressful month.

Some people have made that stress much worse. Others have sort of backed up and given me a bit of room. I thought you were backing up, but I see misread that and I have hurt you and I'm sorry. If you feel this is unfixable, I totally get it.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I need to know now who to trust because other people looking at metoostem are trusting us.

The things which people want (bylaws, structure, hierarchy, communication) are all critical. But those things do not have to happen now. In fact, they can't happen now. I literally can't get the money from GoFundMe yet. I'm hoping it happens this week, but the process has been exasperating and GoFundMe clearly wants to hold onto donations so they can make money off interest. The non-profit consultant I hired with my own non existent money is a lawyer and she seems to be making headway. You're hearing a lot of 'with my own money' language now because people asking for more from me while others try to diminish their own bad choices is really crushing.

I said earlier that some folks have given me what I thought was a bit of room, but I see misread that and I have hurt you and I'm sorry. If you feel this is unfixable, I totally get it.

I am happy to talk to you about any of the issues you have raised. They are serious and I feel I am in a better place to listen now that my daughter is safe, I'm home, the public launch was a success, we may have money at last and I can breath a bit.

I also respect that you may be 'over it' as they say. I hope you will still consider coming as my guest to MIT. You have worked hard and deserve to be celebrated for everything you bring to the lives of women in science. The discussion around sexual harassment will be amazing and if you were able to contribute your voices, it would be enriched by your presence. I also understand if it's too much.

I respect your boundaries...just let me know if you want to talk, to think or how I can proceed.

I really do love and appreciate you guys no matter what.

BethAnn

BethAnn McLaughlin, PhD  
Vanderbilt Department of Neurology  
Lab Site [HERE](#)

VBI Director of the Clinical Neuroscience Scholars Program  
Director of Awesome, The Edge for Scholars  
Reviewing Editor, Journal of Neuroscience  
[My buddy's cat is nuts video here](#)

On Nov 7, 2018, at 8:52 AM, Julie Libarkin <[\[REDACTED\]](#)> wrote:

Dear Beth Ann,

This is a difficult message to write, especially as it comes on the heels of the surprise departure of Shrew and Scott from the MeTooSTEM group. While we are honored to have been able to contribute to this groundbreaking movement, we have been concerned for some time about our ability to work effectively within MeTooSTEM in order to contribute to its success.

Our specific concerns:

- 1) There have been several instances where supporters of MeTooSTEM have been upset by the tenor of your tweets, up to and including blocking you or being blocked by you. Some of them, victims themselves, have reached out to us for clarification and support after the fact, putting us in an impossible position of trying to support victims as well as you and the movement. This is antithetical to the desire to build community.
- 2) The organization has no policies, procedures or delineated roles and our attempts to develop such have been met with resistance. No organization can thrive without structure.
- 3) Questions to you about legal or other organizational steps - such as moving MeTooSTEM and funds into an actual nonprofit - are waved off with vague "I have it covered". Information must be shared for people to effectively work together.
- 4) Actions on the part of the organization are taken without any group discussion or prior warning. Communication - and collaborative decision-making - is essential for advocacy work.
- 5) Transparency has been lacking at times. It is difficult to communicate with our volunteers and base, or field questions on social media, when we lack access to information, leaving many of our supporters in the lurch. Transparency is essential for advocacy work.
- 6) Finally, we are afraid to voice our opinions. This is perhaps the most problematic concern. On some occasions, opinions and concerns have been met with anger and argument rather than discourse. Trust that ideas and suggestions will be received



collegially and in good faith is essential to effective partnerships.

Given the above, we feel it is in our best interest, and the best interest of the movement, to step away from the organization at this time. We will continue to engage in and be supportive of advocacy around sexual misconduct in academia and wish you the best success in launching the MeTooSTEM organization.

Sincerely,  
Julie and Tisha